

Hello Master Gardeners!

Why do we love Autumn? Is it the pretty fall colors, crisp air, football, or kids back in school? This year I can honestly say I love fall because I can finally be done weeding.

Not only were there an abundance of weeds in my garden this year, but if you have maples or elm trees in your yard like me- their seeds have sprouted up everywhere! Plus, after the first frost there are also less insects and no mosquitoes, making it much more pleasant to work in the garden.

Fall provides beautiful changes in the trees and a great chance to enjoy the outdoors before we settle in for the winter. So enjoy the beautiful colors of autumn in asters, chrysanthemums, goldenrods, and bounty of fall apples and vegetables.

—Betty Hamata



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Reminder: MG Volunteer Log Sheets Due October 15



To remain active in the Master Gardener program, you must turn in your volunteer and education hours each year. Enclosed is an extra copy of the MG Volunteer Log sheet. Please give Sarah a call at (402) 727-2775 if you have questions.

Please Join Us! Newsletter Committee Meeting

October 21 st
7:00-8:00 pm
UNL Extension Office
1206 W. 23rd Street
Fremont, NE.

Join us to brainstorm newsletter article ideas for our January 2009 issue of the Going & Growing Newsletter.

From The Garden To The Table

Savory

By Bonnie Parrish

Savory is a peppery flavored herb that is most commonly used as a seasoning for green vegetables, but is especially good with beans. The German word for savory is Bohnenkraut, meaning “bean herb”, and aids in the digestion of sometimes problematic legumes.

The common name “Savory” is used for any plant of the genus *Satureja*, which is made up of aromatic herbs and subshrubs in the *Labiatae* or mint family.

Summer savory, *S. hortensis*, is the most delicate of the two varieties, both in taste and in character. It is an annual that requires light, rich soil and full sun, making it ideal for growing indoors. It will reach a height of about 1½ feet and produces tiny white to rose flowers in late summer.

The stems are square in shape, letting us know it is a member of the

mint family. Summer savory leaves are so tender that they can be added to fresh salads or used as a garnish.

Summer savory dries well. Once dried and chopped, it is an integral part of many herb mixtures including Herbs de Provence, a Mediterranean herb mixture used for stews, vegetable dishes, pizza toppings and a seasoning for roasting meats, fowl, and fish.

Winter savory, *S. montana*, is a coarser perennial plant, often used as a hedging plant in knot gardens. It is a dense perennial shrub that grows to a height of 15 inches in well drained soil and full sun. The leaves of winter savory are bright green, narrow, and tough.

This plant produces fragrant white to lilac colored blossoms that are attractive to bees. Planting winter savory near beehives adds wonderful flavor to honey.

They are best used for dishes that require long cooking, such as stews or added to the water when cooking dried beans so there is enough heat and moisture to break down the leaves.

Winter savory is often used in stuffing, with vegetables, as a seasoning for fowl, and in making sausages. Savory is used in the commercial preparation of salami.

French herbalist Messeque claimed savory was an essential ingredient in love potions he would make for couples. As a boy his father told him it was “the herb of happiness”. Savory has been reputed to be a general tonic to the digestive tract, as well as a powerful antiseptic. Today, because of its pungent oils, savory is commonly used in toothpaste and soaps.

Winter savory, along with rosemary, and the bushy thymes, make wonderfully scented, long-lasting evergreen wreaths for home decoration or holiday use.

Going & Growing Newsletter Contributors:

Betty Hamata
Bonnie Parrish
Lorraine Urban
Sarah Browning
Marilyn Fenton

Mushroom Lentil Barley Stew

2 quarts vegetable broth
2 cups sliced fresh button mushrooms
1 ounce dried shiitake mushrooms, torn into pieces
3/4 cup uncooked pearl barley
3/4 cup dry lentils
1/4 cup dried onion flakes
2 teaspoons minced garlic
2 teaspoons dried summer savory
3 bay leaves
1 teaspoon dried basil

2 teaspoons ground black pepper
Salt to taste

In a slow cooker, mix broth, mushrooms, barley, lentils, onion flakes, garlic, savory, bay leaves, basil, pepper and salt.

Cover and cook 4-6 hours on High or 10-12 hours on Low. Remove bay leaves before serving.

Nursery Notes— Awerega & Canoyer Nurseries

By Lorri Urban

So, it's Fall and you're thinking about doing some landscaping before the snow flies. You might want to visit **Awerega Complete Grounds Care**, located in Fremont, NE, which has been in business for one year.

While the business is new, its owners, Linda and Wes Schiermann, and its landscape designers, Troy Barrett and Jason Houser, are NOT rookie landscapers. They have more than 20 years of combined experience.

Their garden center offers a large selection of perennials, shrubs, trees, and (in season) annuals, and offers help in making selections that will suit individual tastes and also grow well in this area. Customers can collaborate with experienced staff to decide on the plan and materials that will work for them.

Awerega has a large showroom, which includes a gift shop. Since the doors are open all year, except for Jan. and Feb., it could be the place to find just the gift for that special gardening friend, or a Christmas tree for your home or business.

Hours at Awerega are from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and are extended, as advertised in the local paper, during the holiday season for shoppers' convenience.

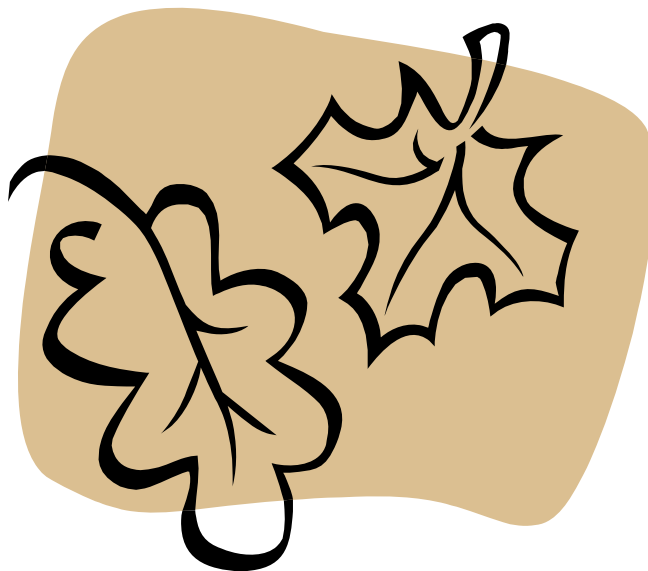
Awerega is located at 1580 Proctor Road, Fremont- south of the Bell Street Viaduct. (Check the map at www.yellowbook.com/directions/awerega For more information or answers to your questions call (402)-

721-0593 or e-mail them at Awerega@myway.com.

Canoyer Garden Center is another nursery that is open year round, except when doing inventory during the month of January. Owner Craig Canoyer actually started growing nursery plants in 1988, an effort that

They have a gift shop that's fully stocked with beautiful gifts, including a large selection of pottery.

Spring hours are from 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. and Winter hours from 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., although these may be listed differently on the web site below. There is much more



has expanded over the years and has resulted in the opening of his first Garden Center. Kyle Canoyer is the General Manager of this venture, now in its third year and located in Papillion, NE.

Some things to be noted about Canoyer Garden Center:

1. They offer garden-related seminars in the spring.
2. They have Open Houses (with treats) in Spring, Fall and during the Christmas season.
3. The Fall Open House has not only treats, but a "family friendly" (read not-too-scary) Halloween Walk. This year it will be held on Oct. 11.

information about products, events, and services at www.canoyergardencenter.com/

Canoyer Garden Center is located at 11240 S. 66 Street, Papillion. To get there, take Center Street east to 72 Street. Turn south at 72 Street and go to Cornhusker. Turn east on Cornhusker to 66 Street and south on 66 Street to Cedardale Rd. Their phone number is (402) 932-0555.

For a VERY LONG list of nurseries (wholesale & retail) and garden centers in the entire state of Nebraska, go to www.agr.state.ne.us/division/bpi/ent/nurserygrowers.htm

Overwintering Your Garden Flowers

By Mary Svoboda

There are many plants that are excellent candidates for overwintering, however, not everything is successful and sometimes you just have to let go. Storage temperature and humidity, the conditions of the plant as it goes into storage, and freedom from diseases and insects all have a bearing on how the plant survives the winter. Generally, geraniums, coleus, fuchsias, tropical hibiscus, and tuberous rooted plants can be stored from one growing season to the next.

Geraniums

There are several types of geraniums grown successfully in Nebraska and some are better suited to overwintering than others. Perennial geraniums, sometimes called Cranesbill and botanically known as *Geranium sp.*, simply stay out in the garden with all the other perennials.

Annual geraniums, botanically *Pelargonium sp.*, includes the traditional zonal geraniums as well as Ivy, Scented, Seed, Rose and Regals (a.k.a. Martha Washington geranium). Zonal, seed, scented and ivy geraniums are most likely to successfully winter indoors.

Geraniums Bareroot.

Often you will read or hear about storing geraniums bare root in the basement over winter. This less successful method depends on the place you have to store them. When houses had cold cellars or pump rooms, it worked quite well, as the conditions were cool and humid. Most modern basements are much too dry and warm.

To try this method, dig up the plants before a frost in fall and cut the branches halfway back. Carefully remove as much soil from the roots as possible.

At this point they are traditionally hung from the rafters until spring. If you don't have rafters, you can bag them separately in paper grocery sacks. Leave the sacks open for ventilation, or use ventilation holes in the bags. Temperatures should be 45-50 degrees with good ventilation.

Check on the plants every month to see if they are getting too dry and shriveling. If necessary, soak them for an hour or two in tepid water and allow their surfaces to dry before putting them back in the paper bags.

In February or March soak the geraniums, roots and all, in water overnight before planting. To get an early start, they can be potted up indoors several weeks before the last frost and transferred into the ground later. When planting directly outdoors, be sure to wait until after all danger of frost.

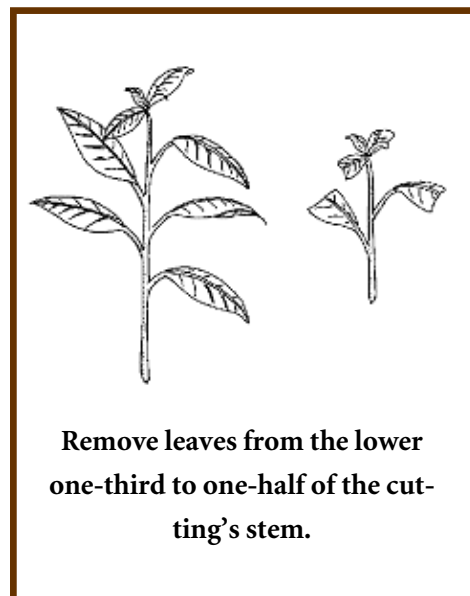
Geraniums As Houseplants

Geraniums do well as house plants if you can provide them with a cool location and lots of light. Dig them up just before frost, cut them back and pot them. Check them over carefully to make sure they are free of insects or disease.

Wintering indoors is stressful, so only take those plants in good condition. Water the plants thoroughly before bringing them in. Indoors, geraniums prefer to stay relatively dry compared to most plants.

Geranium Cuttings

It is possible to take cuttings instead of bringing in whole plants. For the best success, use tip cuttings, made by taking the last 3-5 inches of a branch. Try to avoid branches that are blooming. Remove the leaves from the lower half of the cutting and dip it into root hormone.



Place cuttings about two inches deep into a loose potting soil.

For the first few weeks, keep the cuttings in good light but out of direct sun and keep the potting soil evenly moist. After 3-4 weeks the cuttings will have developed several strong roots. Cuttings can be rooted in individual pots or several cuttings in one container. Once roots have developed the cuttings can be potted individually.

When new top growth begins, move the cuttings to a cool, sunny location and feed them monthly with a soluble

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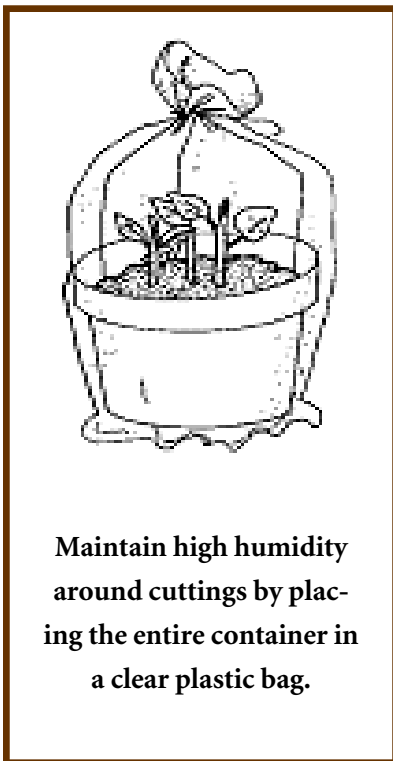
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fertilizer. Remember, geraniums like it on the dry side.

Given enough light, geraniums will develop into well-branched, strong plants by spring. If light is inadequate, they tend to grow rather tall and spindly. If necessary provide additional light with fluorescent tubes or grow lights.

Geraniums that have been overwintered can make very satisfactory plants next season.

- Plants from cuttings will be completely new, productive young plants, just like those you might buy in spring.
- Plants overwintered actively growing should be larger plants with heavier stems. They will bloom almost as much as a young plant.
- Dormant overwintered plants take several weeks to recover in the spring and often need to be



cut back to improve their shape and productivity.

No matter how you overwinter your plant, be sure to wait until after danger of frost before putting them outdoors.

Coleus

Plant propagation is an easy way to save coleus over the winter. Rooting coleus cuttings in soil is the best way to grow healthy plants.

Water plants thoroughly the day before taking cuttings, then choose thick, healthy stems. Using a sharp knife, cut stems approximately 4-5 inches long, removing all leaves from the lower half of the stem.

Insert cuttings into a pot filled with moist potting soil. Keep the growing medium moist. Maintain humidity by enclosing the pot containing the cuttings in a zip-lock bag. Do not fertilize. Check for roots in 7-10 days. They can be transplanted after the roots are 2-3 inches long. In spring, about 4-6 weeks prior to planting, take cuttings from these plants and root as before.

Rooting plants in water is a common home method of propagation. While the technique is easy, there are downsides. If there are several cuttings, separate them into different jars. It is impossible to separate them from each other after they have developed roots and become entangled.

Growing cuttings in a clear glass jar is a great children's project. They are amazed to see roots growing from a stem. Jars with cuttings in water should be set back from direct sun, especially in south or west exposures. Wrapping the container in foil can also aid root development, since

roots grow better in darkness. Roots developed in water have less sturdy tissue structures compared to roots grown in soil. When transplanting stems into soil, care should be taken not to press down too firmly when potting.

Fuchsias

Are tropical and subtropical plants that are not winter hardy in Nebraska. They can either be treated as a houseplant, which grows throughout the winter, or held in a semi-dormant, non-growing state.

Semi-Dormant

To prepare plants for overwintering indoors, stop fertilizing at least two weeks before you anticipate bringing it indoors. Also reduce water applications a great deal, but not so much that the plant starts to die.

Before storing, prune the plants severely leaving only two or three buds on the current season's wood. Plants should be as near dormant as possible when pruned.

Move plants indoors to a cool, 40-50 degree, frost-free area where they can be held in a semi-dormant condition. Conditions should be cool enough to prevent new growth from developing during winter.

In early spring, new growth may begin to appear. When this happens increase moisture and return the plant to bright light and warm growing conditions. Pinch new stems to encourage branching.

Actively Growing

To keep Fuchsias actively growing inside, place the plant in a well-lit direct sun area with temperatures above freezing. I prune my fuchsia in

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Overwintering Your Garden Flowers

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fall, bring it into a sunny place, and it blooms beautifully all winter.

Do not plant overwintered Fuchsias outside until after danger of frost is past.

Begonias

There are three basic types of begonias— fibrous, rhizomatous and tuberous. Fibrous have roots like most plants. Rhizomatous begonias have thick underground stems from which the roots grow. Tuberous begonias produce a fleshy tuber at the base of the stem, similar to a bulb.

Fibrous & Rhizomatous Begonias

Find a healthy 4-inch section from a non-flowering stem to use for propagation. Make a cut directly above a leaf node, remove leaves on the lower half of the stem and dip the cut end in rooting hormone. Insert the cutting into a 3-inch pot filled with moistened potting soil.

Place the entire pot into a clear plastic bag and place it in a bright, filtered, light. Successful propagation has taken place if there is new growth on the plant, which generally takes 3-6 weeks.

At this time, remove the plant from the plastic bag and treat it as a mature begonia.

If you plan on bringing in the entire plant each year, plan to leave the begonias in pots, which causes less stress on the plants. Pots can be set into beds, or arranged into a decorative display.

Tuberous Begonias

Lift mature plants carefully before the first frost. Cut back most of the top, leaving the ball of roots and soil intact. Place it in a dry, cool storage area and allow the tubers to cure for several weeks.

After curing, shake off the soil and remove the remaining stalks and roots. Any portion of the stalk that is left may rot and this could kill the entire tuber.

Store tubers by placing them on screen trays or packing them in dry peat, sand, or other insulating material. A cool, dry, dark storage area is best.

Plants can be started in spring by placing them on damp peat moss and giving them warm temperatures. When roots and tops have started, plant them in small pots and planted outside after danger of frost.

Cannas

These large-leaved, garden showstoppers are easy to overwinter. Right after a light frost has blackened the foliage, carefully dig up the rhizomes. The roots will have grown tremendously over the summer, giving you lots of plants for next year.

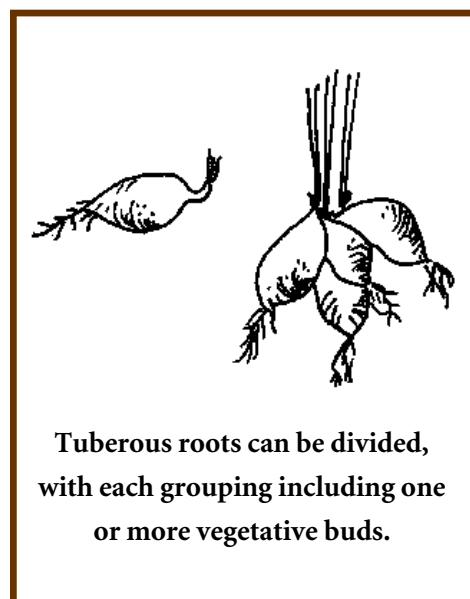
Place the clump in a well-ventilated spot to air dry for a few days. Leave the soil attached to the rhizomes and place the clump in a well-ventilated container. Place the container in a basement or crawl space where it is about 50 degrees or so and dark.

About 6-8 weeks before spring planting, bring them up and divide the

clumps, leaving several growing tips per division. Pot them, water, and place in a well-lighted area to start growing.

Dahlias

Both the large exhibition types and the smaller bedding types are definitely worth saving. After a light frost dig the tubers, which look almost like sweet potatoes. Allow them to air



dry for several hours and then wash the soil away. Cut away any diseased, damaged or insect infested portions. The tubers can be stored in two ways.

Method #1- Leave the clump of tubers intact and place in sawdust, peat moss or other granular insulating medium. The storage area should be cool, dry and frost free.

Method #2- Divide the tubers prior to storage. Dividing the clump before storage takes less space, but leaving

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Fall— A Great Time for Weed Control

By Betty Hamata

This could certainly be called the year of the weeds. With abundant rains this spring they have definitely thrived. But fall is finally here, a great time to control perennial weeds like clover, dandelion, dock, ground ivy, wild violets and field bindweed.

Perennial Weeds

Perennial weeds are best controlled in the fall, from mid-September through late October. At this time of year weeds pull carbohydrates into their root system for use and storage throughout winter.

Because of the downward movement of resources at this time of year, weeds take in herbicides and translocate them into the root system very efficiently. This results in more effective chemical control than summer applications.

This process flows the opposite direction in spring, when carbohydrates produced are normally sent to the

leaves and upper parts of the plant. Herbicide applications made during spring on perennial weeds kills only the top foliage. If the roots remain alive, the weed can regenerate and continue to cause problems through the summer.

Herbicides labeled for controlling broadleaf perennial weeds in lawns include 2,4-D, dicamba, triclopyr, Drive and combination products like Trimec and Triamine. Combination products, which often are a mixture of 2,4-D, dicamba and mecoprop (MCP), generally give better control of broadleaf weeds than either 2,4-D or dicamba alone.

Triclopyr, often sold in products labeled for controlling brush or poison ivy, is another good choice for controlling ground ivy

Some weeds, such as wild violets, have a very waxy leaf coating that prevents herbicides from sticking to the leaves and reduces their effectiveness. The use of a Spreader/Sticker mixed into the herbicide tank will in-

crease the ability of the product to stick onto the leaf surface and can dramatically improve the herbicides performance.

Winter Annuals

Weeds such as henbit, speedwell, and shepardspurge germinate during fall, overwinter as a tiny plant and complete growth, blooming, and seed production the following spring and summer. These plants are called winter annuals.

In areas with a history of winter annual infestation, pre-emergence herbicides, such as Dimension (dithiopyr), Barricade (proflumicafene) or Pendulum (pendimethalin) based products for lawns and Preen (for ornamental beds) can be applied in early September; or post emergence herbicides, such as those listed above for perennial weed control, can be applied in late October.

Annual Weeds

Annual weeds such as crabgrass, purslane, spotted spurge, knotweed

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the clump intact during storage usually results in less tuber shrinkage.

Periodically examine the tubers to prevent spread of rot. Plant tubers in spring after danger of frost is past.

Gladioli

Lift gladioli when the tops start to turn yellow and die. Cut the tops back 2-3 inches and dry the larger

corms in a sunny, well-ventilated area. Cormels are usually discarded and only the larger corms saved for replanting. When the corm is sufficiently dry, remove the old tops, corms and cormels.

Store the larger, new corms on trays to dry or in dry vermiculite, sawdust or sand in a cool, dark, dry place. Inspect corms frequently during the winter and discard any disease mate-

rial. Replant when danger of frost is past.

Hibiscus

The Hibiscus genus is a large group of plants that includes hardy perennial species, while others are annuals, shrubs or tropical plants. Species hardy in Nebraska include the tree-like Rose-of-Sharon, *Hibiscus syriacus*, and the herbaceous perennial *H. moscheutos*, which includes popular cul-

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2009 International Master Gardener Conference

"New Frontiers in Horticulture and Gardening"

**March 22-26, 2009
Alexis Park Resort
Las Vegas, Nevada**

Official website of the 2009 International Master Gardener Conference: <http://www.unce.unr.edu/imgc/>

On-line registration and hotel reservations can be made during the summer of 2008.

Our host hotel, the **Alexis Park**, is the **premiere, all-suite, non-gaming resort** in Las Vegas. Beautifully landscaped grounds, three sparkling pools and finely appointed guest suites ensure a relaxing retreat. It's just minutes from the exciting Las Vegas Strip, where you can enjoy world-class cuisine, fantastic shopping,

renowned golf courses and spectacular entertainment. But we're not just neon lights. Experience the **"unexpected" side of Vegas** — our exotic desert landscapes, historic sites, Master Gardener projects, and behind the scenes gardening at exclusive hotels.

Explore **"New Frontiers" in horticulture and gardening** — learn what is new and exciting in plant material and equipment, energy efficient practices, environmentally sensitive design, gardening for health, and more!

The Las Vegas **International Master Gardener Conference** will address issues that gardeners everywhere face -- water conservation, proper plant selection, soil enrichment, pest control -- while also presenting new concepts in environmental stewardship and "green" technologies.

Since what is old has become new again, we will also explore historical and traditional plants and methods.

Workshop Topics: Green Technologies, Water Conservation, Heirloom Plants, LEED, Healthy Gardening, Native Seeds, Farm to Restaurant, Ancestors' Gardens, Trees for Tomorrow, Artful Gardening, Water Harvesting, Soil Microbes, Interactive Learning.

Tours: Hoover Dam, Grand Canyon, LV Springs Preserve, Ethyl M Cactus Garden and Living Machine, Red Rock Canyon, Spring Mountain Ranch, Desert Rose Garden, China Ranch Date Farm, Gardens at the Bellagio and Wynn resorts.

Contact:
Ann Edmunds, Program Coordinator
edmundsa@unce.unr.edu
702-257-5587

Fall— A Great Time for Weed Control, Continued

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and black medic will be killed by frost in just a few weeks so herbicide applications are not recommended at this time.

To control these weeds next year, apply a pre-emergent herbicide the first week of May. Reapplication of pre-emergence herbicides will be necessary to give continued control throughout the summer season, based on the residual length of each product.

Common pre-emergent herbicides include:

- Balan (benefin)- 6 week residual
- Team (trifluralin & benefin) - 8 week residual

- Dimension (dithiopyr) - 9 week residual
- Pendimethalin (several formulations) - 12 week residual
- Barricade (proflam) - 16 week residual
- Wow or Concern (corn gluten meal) - 6 week residual; lower strength compared to other products but an organic alternative to traditional products; results in high N applications

Common weeds controlled using pre-emergent herbicides are listed below along with dates for pre-emergent herbicide application.

- Prostrate knotweed—late fall/winter; repeat mid February
- Crabgrass—first week of May, or when soil temperatures reach

55 degrees, at a four inch depth, for two consecutive days

- Foxtail & spurge- late May/early June
- Annual bluegrass & henbit—early September

Water pre-emergent applications in immediately using at least 1/2 inch of water. Many pre-emergence herbicides degrade very quickly if left exposed to the sunlight. Watering will move the herbicide into the soil and will encourage germination of weed seeds that will be killed by the herbicide.

Just remember when using a pre-emergent herbicide and you have self-seeding annuals in your planting beds that the herbicide will prevent them from germinating too.

Programs for Additional Education Hours

Arboretum and Botanical Garden Tours Scheduled for Omaha Area & Eastern Nebraska

Mark your calendars for the following tours of Nebraska arboreta and botanical gardens scheduled for 2008. The free tours will offer a chance for tree lovers, garden enthusiasts and green industry professionals to see and learn more about many great plants and many great gardens.

The tours will emphasize rare and impressive trees, but will also be a great opportunity to see many other beautiful garden plants and associated wildlife. The tours are coordinated and sponsored by the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum in partnership with local affiliated sites.

More information will be available on the NSA website at: <http://arboretum.unl.edu>, or by contacting NSA at (402) 472-2971 or jeverson1@unl.edu.

Thursday, Oct 23, 3:00pm to 5:30pm:

Blair Fall Color Tour including Steyer Park and Black Elk Park.

Thursday, Nov 6, 3:00pm to dusk:

Nebraska City Fall Color Tour including Arbor Lodge State Park, Nebraska City High School and NADF Arbor Day Farm.



Nebraska Statewide Arboretum Landscape Management Workshops

A series of landscape management workshops have been scheduled for this fall. The workshops are aimed at creating and managing landscapes that are beautiful, functional and more sustainable.

With sessions on rain water, pest management and sustainable designs, Nebraska Statewide Arboretum's Justin Evertson says, "there's something for everyone-groundskeepers, park employees, arborists, turf care professionals, golf course managers and home owners."

"Stormwater management is a growing concern," Evertson says, "so this year there are several sessions on rain gardens and other water management strategies." The workshops are sponsored by Nebraska Statewide Arboretum and Nebraska Forest Service. Arboretum and Forest Service staff lead the sessions, along with John Royster of Big Muddy Workshop, Kim Todd from UNL, Bryan Kinghorn of Kinghorn Gardens, etc.

Certified arborists, nursery professionals and parks professionals can receive CEUs for the workshop. Workshops will run from 8:30 to 4:30 p.m. (registration at 8:00) at these sites around the state:

- Sept 30 (Tuesday) - Omaha: National Park Service, Midwest Regional Office, 601 Riverfront Dr.
- October 2 (Thursday) - Norfolk: Northeast Community College Lifelong Learning Center
- Oct 14 (Tuesday) - Hastings: Central Community College, 3 miles east of Hastings on Hwy 6
- Oct 16 (Thursday) - Scottsbluff: UNL Panhandle Research & Extension Center

For more information call Evertson at 402/472-5045. More information and online registration at <http://arboretum.unl.edu>.

What About These Garden Conferences? Or Milwaukee Here We Come

By Lorraine Urban & Marilyn Fenton
Photos by Marilyn Fenton

So, what do you do if it's garden season and you want a break? Well, you could go to a Garden Conference. There are several regional conferences to choose from in the "off-years" - those years between the biennial International Garden Conferences.

That's what we did this summer. We wanted a conference that we could drive to in a day and would have workshops about plants and practices for Zone 4 & 5. And that's what we got, even though we chose to take two days coming and going. So Marilyn and I attended the 2008 Midwest Regional Master Conference, held in Milwaukee, WI.

Our first stop on the way was in Independence, IA at the Independence State Hospital that was built on the Kirkbride plan for mental hospitals. (Lots of our friends would have said that stop was long over-due for us and, maybe, we should stay awhile.)

The hospital is surrounded by beautiful, well-kept grounds; one of Dr. Kirkbride's requirements for the restoration of mental health was for the patients to be surrounded by beauty. We would not argue with that.

We drove from Independence to Decorah where we stayed in a B & B and the next morning went to the Seed Savers Exchange a few miles outside of town. Because of flooding in that part of Iowa, some of the gar-

dens there were not accessible to visitors, but there were lovely flower and vegetable garden that we COULD see.

We also picked up a brochure telling about Willowglen Nursery about 6 miles away. Since we had the time, we made that stop, too, and were so glad we did. Beautiful! (The clematis we bought there had a "Bluebird Nursery" symbol on it.)

This year's Midwest Regional Conference was presented by the Wisconsin Master Gardener Association & Uni-

versity of Wisconsin Extension Master Gardener Program and was held from July 16th - 19th in Milwaukee.

Keynote speakers were:

- Michael Weishan, who was the host of PBS Victory Garden from 2001-2007;
- Melinda Myers, best known for her practical approach to gardening and for a column she writes in Backyard Living called "The Plant Doctor;"

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Since 1975, Seed Savers Exchange members have passed on approximately one million samples of rare garden seeds to other gardeners. We are a non-profit organization of gardeners dedicated to saving and sharing heirloom seeds. Located in Decorah, IA and online at www.seedsavers.org.

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- Ed Lyon, director of Allen Centennial Gardens in Madison, WI;
- and Gene Rothert, who manages the Horticultural Therapy Services department at the Chicago Botanic Gardens.

All of the speakers were interesting, but a couple of thoughts from Ed Lyon really resonated with us. Paraphrased, he said:

1. American gardens are all about lawns. Lawnmowers are pollutants, and fertilizers and weed kills are harmful to our environment. We plant grasses that are non-native and stay green longer. Because of this, the geese stay longer, too. It only takes 1 generation for geese to lose the instinct to migrate.
2. Plant breeding is fast & furious. All you have to do is look through the multitudes of nursery catalogs to be amazed at how many new plants are offered each year. But, not all new plants are "good" plants. Some are not fully "trialed" before being put on the market; they are not all equally robust. When plants don't do well, gardeners tend to blame themselves. It could be that you purchased a weak cultivar.

We got to choose which workshops to attend when we pre-registered. We thought the selection was wide-ranging, the topics were interesting, and the presenters were high-quality.

Some of those we attended were: "The Art of Garden Photography," "Growing Succulent Plants," "Phrenology is NOT a Contagious Disease," and "Chocolate - From Elixir

of the Gods to Your Midwestern Garden." The food was well above average and the vendors were a nice sidebar to the events.

Garden tours were offered on the first day of the Conference. Last year we did one of the tours. But, this year we chose to do our own garden touring on the way to and from the conference.

walked up and down Shake Rag Alley, where we saw some of the original buildings built by the settlers from Cornwall, England who had come here to work in the lead mine.

So, what did we get out of this trip? In addition to satisfying all of our continuing education hours, we met nice people, learned more about gardening, and found some great plants.



Nebraska Master Gardener Marilyn Fenton and Midwest Regional Master Gardener Conference keynote speaker Michael Weishan

Heading home, we made a stop at a nursery which came highly recommended by Wisconsin gardeners - The Flower Factory, a VERY LARGE nursery just south of Madison. Even though our car was full to overflowing, we found room for a few more must-haves.

And, the last stop of note was in Mineral Point, WI, a Cornish settlement that is now an arts/crafts colony decorated with lovely gardens. We

How much did this cost? We figured our cost for the trip was about \$450 each, counting the cost of the conference, the gas, the overnight stays, and the food - but not the cost of our plants and other purchases.

Was it worth it? We're looking forward to the next convention!

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Petunias, Continued

(Continued from page 7)

tivars such as 'Disco Belle', 'Lord Baltimore' and 'Kopper King'. Other species, including Swamp hibiscus, *H. coccineus*, Confederate Rose, *H. mutabilis*, and Chinese hibiscus, *H. rosa-sinensis*, are not hardy enough to survive a Nebraska winter outdoors, so must be moved indoors as soon as the weather starts to change.

These tropical plants will be stressed or damaged by the first real cold and that would make it harder for the plant to survive the winter indoors.

If you do leave it outside too long, it is still worthwhile moving it inside. If you have grown your hibiscus in the ground, you can dig it up, pot it into a 10-12 inch container and to bring it inside.

Place the plant in an area with temperatures between 50 degrees or higher, and very bright light, preferably with strong morning and afternoon sun. Plants will continue to grow, needing regular watering and fertilization. If managed in this way, your hibiscus will not only survive the winter, but will reward you with many blooms.

You can always view the
Going & Growing Newsletter
online and in color at
[http://extensionhorticulture.unl.edu/
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